

# Using the Locator Tool

**to categorize LEP students for the  
2006 Idaho English Language Assessment**

## Q: Why do I need a Locator Tool?

**All LEP students in the State of Idaho will be taking the IELA (Idaho English Language Assessment) between March 1 and April 14, 2006. For grades 1-12, there are two Reading/Writing forms – an easier form and a more challenging form. Thus, it is necessary to determine which form each student will take.**

**Q: Why are there two different forms for the same grade?**

**Having two test forms of differing difficulty levels means:**

- *the test can be shorter*
- *the test will be better centered on the student's ability*
- *the testing experience will be less frustrating for beginners*

## Q: What exactly *is* the Locator Tool?

**The Locator Tool is a list of 10 statements on which the teacher rates the student based on classroom observations and assessments.**

**A rating of 0 means the statement is never true. A rating of 3 means the statement is almost always true.**

# There are:

- **5 statements about the student's reading ability, and**
- **5 statements about the student's writing ability.**

**For example, one reading-ability statement might be: “Student reads and understands two-step directions for classroom activities.”**

**One writing-ability statement might be: “Student spells correctly many high frequency words.”**

# Q: How does the Locator Tool categorize students?

**Based on their total score, students are categorized as:**

- ***R/W Beginner (will take R/W Form 1)***
- ***R/W Intermediate/Advanced (will take R/W Form 2)***

*Note: All students, regardless of categorization, will take the same Listening and Speaking form.*

Q: Is the student's proficiency in reading and writing in their native language taken into account?

**No. The rating is based solely on the student's ability to read and write in English.**

Q: Does the student need to be present when the Locator Tool is completed?

No.



Q: Does our school/district need to use the Locator Tool if we already know the ability of our students?

No.

## Q: Who should complete the Locator Tool?

**The Locator Tool should be completed by a teacher who knows the student well and is familiar with his or her classwork and homework.**

# Q: Are there different Locator Tools for different grades?

**Yes. There is a Locator Tool for each of the following grade spans:**

- *grades 1-2*
- *grades 3-5*
- *grades 6-12*

## Q: What about Kindergarten?

**There is no Locator Tool for kindergarteners because there is only one IELA form for K.**

## Q: Where do I get the Locator Tool?

**Teachers can get copies of the needed single-page Locator Tool forms from their School IELA Coordinator or they can download the forms from the Idaho LEP website:**

**[www.boardofed.idaho.gov/lep/LEPAssessment.asp](http://www.boardofed.idaho.gov/lep/LEPAssessment.asp)**

***As many photocopies as needed can be made for use within a school.***